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Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Throughout the series of United Nations summits and conferences that culminated in the Millennium Summit of the United Nations and the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000, world leaders committed to the full and timely implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, integrating them into the United Nations development agenda. The Goals have been successful in prioritizing development issues and creating momentum for their implementation. While significant and substantial progress has been made in meeting many of the targets, progress has also been unequal, both among countries and goals; new challenges have emerged. A new development agenda will need to take into account an international environment that has changed dramatically since 2000. It will need to contain a vision that integrates a broader scope of issues and the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) with universal applicability, while taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

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The present report addresses ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future. The report highlights opportunities for accelerating the achievement of the Goals through key facilitators and enablers of development at all levels, including effective leadership and conducive policy frameworks. It recommends sound national development strategies, strong public institutions, as well as supportive environments that include peace, stability and respect for human rights. The report suggests actions necessary for achieving development gains that are more inclusive, equitable and sustainable. It posits that structural transformations are needed to bring about employment-centred growth, distributional equity and coherent social policy frameworks that address inequalities at the national and international levels. In-depth periodic reviews conducted on the basis of sound data, monitoring and reporting will be critical for success, including through mechanisms that promote accountability and transparency. The report notes that capacity-building, technology and an effective use of big data have the potential for improving implementation, review and monitoring.

I. Introduction

1. The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals marked a crucial step in international development efforts and in raising the visibility of the United Nations development agenda. The Goals represent an important global shift to an approach that places human development at the centre of international development efforts and that focuses on results, underpinned by the relevant targets and indicators for measuring progress.

2. Several Millennium Development Goals targets will be met by 2015, assuming continued commitment by all stakeholders. Some targets have already been met: in particular, the world reached the global poverty reduction target five years ahead of schedule. Yet despite significant progress, without strong national action and regional and global cooperation, many countries will not achieve all of the Goals. Challenges remain in ensuring that the global partnership for development is strengthened and fully supports accelerating policy implementation to meet the Goals.

3. Governments have taken a leading role in steering the implementation of consistent policies at the local, national, regional and global levels. Many other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and philanthropic organizations, have greatly increased their role and play a major part in the delivery of development goals. Their contribution is vital in the coming years.

4. With the target date approaching quickly, three overarching priorities are (a) to accelerate progress to achieve the targets; (b) to narrow the achievement gap between and within countries; and (c) to consolidate the gains achieved while addressing new and emerging development challenges to smooth the transition to the post-2015 development agenda.

5. These priorities will need to be addressed against the backdrop of a changing international environment where sustainable development challenges are as pressing as ever. The incidence of poverty remains widespread while, at the same time, the majority of the poor now live in middle-income countries. Levels of inequality continue to rise in many countries. Emerging economies are increasingly important in global trade, the world economy and the development landscape, which has also seen the emergence of multiple development actors.

6. Today's changed international environment calls for a new vision and a development framework based on the values and principles of the Millennium Declaration. In the outcome document of the special event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (General Assembly resolution 68/6) convened by the President of the General Assembly on 25 September 2013, Member States agreed on a road map, calling for a single framework and set of goals, universal in nature and applicable to all countries, while taking account of differing national circumstances and respecting national policies and priorities.

7. It is against that backdrop that the present report addresses the theme of the 2014 annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council. The report recognizes that many factors have converged either to enhance or impede progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The report builds on the many landmark contributions already made. These include the report of the Secretary-General, "A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the

Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015" (A/68/202 and Corr.1)); the Millennium Development Goals Reports and the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force report of 2013, entitled *The Global Partnership for Development: The Challenge We Face*;[1] A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development: the Report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda; and the reports of the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda.

8. The report addresses three key areas for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and for sustaining development gains in the future. Section II analyses facilitators and enablers of development progress, including achievement of the Goals; section III focuses on sustaining development gains through inclusive development; and section IV addresses measuring progress in achievement of the Goals, and monitoring and accountability beyond 2015. Section V presents the main conclusions and recommendations.

II. Facilitators and enablers of progress in achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

9. More than a decade of experience in working towards the Millennium Development Goals has provided insights into approaches that work and others that do not, although no precise set of solutions can apply to all countries in exactly the same way. Strong national ownership, well-managed policies and peaceful sociopolitical and stable economic environments, supported coherently by all partners, including the United Nations system, are seen as critical ingredients for success. Effective leadership and participative strategies are also necessary components of a successful formula. These have to be grounded in sound national visions and strategies for development built on a strengthened legal, policy and institutional framework as the basis for sustaining development gains.

10. At the same time, a stable and supportive external environment based on a broad vision of development cooperation that encompasses technical assistance and concessional, countercyclical financing and other transfers is essential. As well, inclusive, transparent and favourable rules and governance arrangements related to systemic issues in trade, finance and technology, among others, are all important to successful implementation.

A. Changes in policy and legislation that drive progress in development

National development visions and strategies

11. National development visions and strategies remain central to the design and implementation of policy frameworks for pursuing development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals and the larger set of internationally agreed development goals from the 1990s. While the Goals are global targets, countries have modified them to suit their own contexts with slightly different —

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.15.

albeit congruent — objectives. For example, according to the 2005 national Millennium Development Goals report on Colombia, the national target for the country was adapted to reducing the proportion of people living in extreme poverty from 20.4 to 8.8 per cent. National policy frameworks are also critical mechanisms for monitoring success and for holding Governments accountable for delivering on development undertakings.

12. The international community, including the United Nations system, has continued its efforts to support development objectives consistent with the national policy frameworks of countries. In particular, the United Nations system has worked with its partners to support governments in various ways. By 2008, the United Nations system and other partners had supported 73 countries[2] to integrate the Millennium Development Goal targets into national plans by (a) adopting inclusive planning processes; (b) reviewing existing strategies and defining the baseline; (c) conducting Millennium Development Goals needs assessments that estimate the infrastructural, human resources and financial requirements for key Goals-related interventions; and (d) developing short- to medium-term national strategies to achieve the Goals.

13. Investment and service delivery at the subnational and local levels are important to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. National development goals were translated into localization strategies for the Goals with the participation and engagement of local communities to ensure ownership. In Niger, for example, local communities were involved in the design of a local revenue collection system and rehabilitated a school and a hospital.[3] In Brazil, the capacities of Government, civil society organizations and the public were developed to monitor social expenditures to ensure that local priorities are financed. Localizing Millennium Development Goals allowed local authorities to keep national Governments informed of their specific needs and helped draw attention to national disparities and pockets of poverty.

14. Most of these actions were accompanied by changes in laws, government decisions, ministerial orders or decrees, local ordinances and technical norms. In some cases, legislative changes aimed at tackling discrimination affecting specific population groups, as in the case of the gender equality laws (goal 3) in Montenegro, Pakistan and Tajikistan, or the review of gaps in legislation for the enforcement of the rights of people living with HIV and populations at risk (goal 6), in Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan and Lesotho. In other cases, changes covered sectors related to the Goals, for example the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health and rights (goals 4 and 5) through bills and laws, including at the constitutional level in Albania, Peru and Rwanda. The inclusion of laws and regulations governing the use of environmental resources to conserve biodiversity and increase access to water and sanitation services for the achievement of goal 7 were undertaken in Belize, Niger and the United Republic of Tanzania.[4]

15. In some countries, national vision statements have focused on unique national priorities. There are good examples from Bhutan, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Jamaica,

[2] Gonzalo Pizarro, "Lessons from the operationalization of the MDGs", United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Working Paper No. 10, December 2013.

[3] United Nations and UNDP, Synthesis of National Reports for Rio+20, 2012.

[4] United Nations Development Group, MDG Good Practices, 2010, available from http://mdgpolicynet.undg.org/?q=node/11.

Pakistan, Viet Nam and Zambia, where concepts such as gross national happiness, the right to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment and sustainable development have been promoted in this way. Other countries, including Cambodia, Ecuador, Senegal, Togo and Uganda, have incorporated different themes relating to environmental and natural resource management into their national development strategies, as well as in policies and programmes to address climate change, biodiversity, desertification, forests and wetlands, energy, water supply and sanitation.

16. However, many countries have had difficulties establishing effective implementation linkages between related Millennium Development Goals. Policy linkages across interventions would lead to better results. For instance, better linkages between poverty eradication and environmental policies; economic and social policies; poverty eradication, education and health policies; or between labour market policies and social protection improve development outcomes.

17. The types of changes mentioned above can have a big impact, however small or symbolic the change. For instance, changes in the quotas for women in parliament in Rwanda led to pro-poor, gender-sensitive laws, and the mere threat of audits in Indonesia is reported to have had an impact on the level of embezzlement of public funds.

Absence of violent conflict/peace, stability and human rights

18. At least one fifth of humanity lives in countries experiencing significant violence, political conflict, insecurity and societal fragility. Such conditions form a major obstacle to development, with lasting implications for societal well-being. Most countries affected by violence or fragility have not achieved many of the Millennium Development Goal targets. The situation is even worse for affected countries in Africa. Countries experiencing protracted violent conflict have poverty rates more than 20 percentage points higher than the global average. Fragile and conflict-affected countries also face far higher levels of undernourishment, educational deficits, child mortality, single female-headed households with young children, unsafe drinking water and deprivation of basic sanitation. Peace, defined as the "absence of violence" or "absence of the fear of violence", is associated with multiple factors that reinforce one another, such as gender equality, justice, equal opportunities to access education and employment, sound management of natural resources, human rights protection, inclusive economic and political institutions, the rule of law and low levels of corruption.[5] Prevention of conflict and sustained peace can provide a necessary condition for development gains, as shown by the recent experiences of Cambodia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Rwanda, among many others.

19. The prevention and reduction of all forms of violence, and protection against their specific manifestations, should be at the heart of sustaining future development gains, recognizing the centrality of security both as a human rights imperative and as integral to development.

20. Addressing the sources of conflicts requires a multidimensional approach, which would have to take into account the interrelated dimensions of development, human rights, peace, security and the rule of law. Peace and security, including

[5] United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, "Realizing the future we want for all: report to the Secretary-General", June 2012, para. 45.

freedom from political persecution, discrimination and all forms of violence, are not only critical conditions for development but are also outcomes of development. Experience shows — and various intergovernmental agreements explicitly recognize — peace and security, development and human rights as interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

21. Meeting the imperatives of peace and security is often most urgent for highly vulnerable populations, including women and girls, children and the aged, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless persons and indigenous and minority groups.

B. Opportunities for accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

22. Reviews of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals have revealed approaches that have worked and opportunities for overcoming obstacles. Some of the contributing factors for success are effective national ownership, well-articulated policies, environments that are peaceful and stable and the support of all partners, including the United Nations system. Applying these lessons is important for accelerating progress in the time that remains and for sustaining the gains as a future development agenda takes shape.

23. While accelerating progress on the Millennium Development Goals as 2015 approaches requires action by all stakeholders, the primary responsibility for action rests with national Governments. Important foundations for the achievement of the Goals include strong national leadership and ownership of development policies, as well as sound macroeconomic management conducive to economic growth, supported by suitable legal and regulatory frameworks that promote economic stability.

24. Coherent sectoral policy frameworks in areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, industry, health and the environment are also very important. In Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), established in 2001, has guided socioeconomic development, particularly by formulating sectoral policy frameworks and programmes in its main thematic priority areas. The NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and Pan African Nutrition Initiative are supporting progress towards goal 1, the e-school initiative and the school feeding programme support achievement of goal 2, the Gender Framework supports goal 3 and the African Medicines Regulatory Harmonization Programme goals 4 and 5.

25. It will also be necessary to strengthen monitoring and accountability for delivering on development results at the country level. This will require action that involves all arms of Government and is based on empowering citizens to engage in the development process, not only as recipients of services but as agents of change.

26. The ministerial declaration adopted at the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 2013 (E/HLS/2013/3) affirmed that science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, are essential enablers and drivers for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion of sustainable development, and therefore recommended that building capacity in science, technology and innovation, particularly in information technology, be given consideration in the post-2015 development agenda. Science, technology and

innovation also offer a unique opportunity for exploiting development opportunities in untapped areas that can be critical to empowering excluded populations.

27. Effective science, technology and innovation systems require a holistic policy framework clearly articulated in national development strategies and supported by relevant public and private institutions. These frameworks should be aligned with the Millennium Development Goals and be forward looking, using the same or similar targets and indicators for monitoring success. The policies should be culturally specific and take into account indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices, as well as opportunities for creating value in these areas in ways that improve livelihoods but also protect cultural and natural assets.

28. Development objectives should also take into account positive cultural dimensions and sensitivities. Cultural and creative industries have a large potential as a source of empowerment and income generation that can accelerate poverty eradication, empower disadvantaged groups and contribute to bridging achievement gaps, such as those due to gender. Sociocultural approaches to health can lead to cost-effective and more efficient health policies, and cultural and traditional know-how can promote sustainable use of natural resources.

29. In all of the areas listed above, the United Nations system should continue to play a supportive role by helping national Governments close the capacity gaps in their development efforts. It should offer thematic and sectoral policy advice that takes into account the need to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and for sustaining the gains. In this regard, United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, where in use, should be strengthened and utilized more effectively in supporting national development strategies and priorities.

30. One of the tools developed in response to the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (General Assembly resolution 65/1), held in 2010, is the Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework for countries with off-track targets at either the national or subnational level. It has been used to tackle multiple off-track goals in areas such as maternal health, hunger, poverty, water and sanitation and HIV/AIDS. Several countries have gone beyond the traditional set of Millennium Development Goals, applying the Framework in addressing economic disparities, education quality, energy access and non-communicable diseases. As a flexible and systematic tool the Framework leads to a concrete plan of action, with coordinated roles for Government, United Nations agencies and all other stakeholders.

31. The experience in more than 50 roll-out countries has demonstrated the flexibility, relevance and adaptability of the Framework, in a variety of contexts. In practice, it has been shown that the Framework is a useful tool that helps in addressing inequalities, reducing economic disparities across regions through subnational application, and across population groups. It is most effective when there is ownership and demonstrated political determination. Experience has also shown that the better the quality of data (with adequate levels of disaggregation, timeliness and periodicity) and the more participative the partnership between Governments, the United Nations system and other stakeholders, the more effective and impactful are the action plans.

C. The role of institutions

Institutions and development

32. Institutions are defined either as entities, formal and informal procedures, rules of the game and regulatory frameworks that shape behaviour in somewhat predictable ways and mediate socioeconomic contracts on issues such as governance, economic management, trade, investment and finance; or as the set of rules or norms that have emerged to guide the actions of individuals, firms, societal and economic actors and nations, individually and collectively. Strong, predictable and effective institutions are important for social stability and development progress and can help provide a more sustainable base for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals that will transition into a sustainable development path.

33. Effective institutions are instrumental in promoting a virtuous circle of political stability, sustained growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development. Measures must be taken to reform and strengthen existing institutions and to build the new institutions necessary for accelerating development achievements, consolidating gains and moving forward to mediate the more complex sustainable development agenda.

34. Building a strong policy and institutional base to support development at all levels can be a challenge for many countries. This is because development is dynamic, and the institutional and other structural arrangements that create a conducive environment are always changing. Moreover, these arrangements tend to be country- and time-specific and cannot be packaged and distributed as a one-size-fits-all solution.

35. The struggle to create and strengthen policies and institutions is often complicated by low capacity, particularly in terms of the human, technological and financial resources required to implement such changes. The message contained in the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, reaffirming the important role of institutions and the need to focus on inclusion and calling for "open and accountable institutions for all" that deliver peace and foster economic and social sustainability, must be seen in this light.

36. The public entities and secretariats that provide information and help generate, encode and enforce rules and regulations, as well as deliver critical public services, are important actors in the development process. Institutions in the private sector and civil society also play important roles. It is therefore essential to create synergy among these institutions to ensure integration and harmony for delivering on the Millennium Development Goals and for attaining sustainable development.

37. Effective institutions are necessary at the global, regional, national, subnational and community levels to nurture appropriate legal, regulatory and policy frameworks for all stakeholders to play their roles. The starting point for determining the effectiveness of institutional and policy changes, and the required political commitment, is the degree to which citizens feel empowered and engaged in promoting action and holding all responsible parties accountable for outcomes. The key drivers of such change and competencies include strong leadership at all levels; public engagement; effective systems of checks and balances and of monitoring and accountability; and the flexibility and resilience to adapt and respond to emerging needs.

38. Institutional entities and organizations, whether in the public or private sector, work effectively only when they are well staffed and managed. Therefore, it is important to develop adequate human resource capacity. Public servants working with professionalism, ethics and integrity are essential to the capability of institutions and the State and to fighting and eliminating corruption.

39. At the national level, institutional reforms should lead to outcomes that are accessible to populations at all income levels and all social groups, and that address the needs of both rural and urban areas. Legal reforms should give rise to institutions and policies that promote access to justice and peaceful solutions. The rule of law should embed values, enable checks to the exercise of power, protect property rights, lower transaction costs and allow people to make effective use of their assets.

40. E-government has great potential to promote more effective service delivery and to promote action on inequality and poverty eradication, as well as wider sustainable development goals in the post-2015 era. The main enabler of a good e-government system is putting in place a governance framework to support and manage service delivery, including national information and communications technology policies and an e-government strategy, as well as strengthening institutions and building the capacities of public servants and citizens to use information and communications technology.

Multilateral institutional architecture and commitments

41. A strong global cooperation and governance architecture, centred on the role of the United Nations in maintaining policy coherence, identifying new and emerging priorities and monitoring and tracking progress, is critical both for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and for shaping an ambitious post-2015 development agenda. The acceleration of achievement of the Goals and the transition to the post-2015 agenda, with poverty and sustainable development at its core, demand such a coherent and coordinated approach across the United Nations intergovernmental and inter-agency machinery.

42. This global development cooperation and governance system should also recognize that the United Nations operates in a broader context that includes other multilateral entities, the regional development banks, as well as international, regional and bilateral trade and cooperation arrangements with different methods of monitoring and accountability. It is the interaction of this complex institutional architecture that contributes to the achievement of development results, including the Millennium Development Goals and any future development agenda.

43. Account must also be taken of the need to collaborate closely with the regional and subregional organizations and country groupings whose activities are set within the broader framework of partnerships for development cooperation. These are critical entry points in delivering effective and regionally specific and relevant development assistance.

44. Recent innovations, such as the establishment of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and a strengthened Economic and Social Council that will provide substantive leadership, pulling together the institutional knowledge and analytical capacity of its subsidiary bodies, will lead the integration of the three

dimensions of sustainable development and will enhance coherence and synergies for more effective implementation and oversight.

45. Traditional functions of the Economic and Social Council that have enjoyed a high level of success, such as the Development Cooperation Forum; meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and the thematic debates will remain key building blocks of the intergovernmental machinery for dialogue, review, consensus-building, monitoring and accountability. The regional and functional commissions would remain critical forums for continuing and refining their work to fully support delivery, within their mandates, on all the internationally agreed development goals, as well as on the thematic areas of a future post-2015 development agenda.

46. Collaborative partnerships that strengthen the involvement of the regional commissions and other United Nations regional mechanisms, regional development banks and financial institutions, the private sector, civil society and the scientific community in regional-level reviews should inform and influence implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and prepare for the future sustainable development agenda.

III. Sustaining development gains through inclusive development

47. The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals clearly demonstrates their historic contribution by providing a common framework for addressing poverty and putting human progress at the forefront of the global development agenda. While a major strength of the Goals derives from their focus on a limited set of concrete, common human development goals and targets, this strength has also been viewed as a weakness, leading to the undervaluation of certain development elements or dimensions. For example, the Goals did not sufficiently emphasize or address issues of economic growth, productive employment, investment in basic infrastructure, social protection or distributional equity. Current discussions on the post-2015 development agenda have also included the central concerns of how to achieve development that is inclusive, equitable and sustainable, as well as the necessary broader economic and social transformations.

48. These issues have gained prominence with the recognition that (a) inequalities and disparities along multiple dimensions are a major obstacle to poverty reduction and a constraint to the achievement of most other development goals;[6] (b) environmental challenges reduce the possible pathways for progress towards development goals and for sustaining gains into the future; and (c) the broader context, including macroeconomic policies, international trade and financial regimes, and regional or global cooperation arrangements shape the conditions for development progress.

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[6] See, for example, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), *Combating Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.III.Y.1); *Inequality Matters: Report on the World Social Situation 2013* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 13.IV.2); and UNDP, *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries* (New York, 2013).

49. The new development agenda will face greater complexities, including issues of universality, temporality (sustaining gains into the future requires a long-term perspective that includes the needs of future generations) and coherence in shaping an approach that recognizes trade-offs and conflicts among different policy choices.

A. The challenge of inclusive development

50. Recent experiences from around the world have shown that periods of rapid economic growth do not automatically or necessarily translate into broadly shared and equitable, i.e., inclusive, development outcomes. In many countries, growth has been associated with rising inequality and with gains increasingly concentrated among a shrinking share of the population, whether at the national or global level.

51. Economic growth that reduces poverty remains essential, particularly for low-income countries. Yet critical links between economic growth and a reduction in poverty and inequality are related to the nature and pattern of growth and thus to how the benefits are shared. The assumption that processes exist whereby the poor will automatically share in the gains of growth is no longer defensible. Market-led growth founded on high levels of initial inequality, whether of income or wealth, reinforces pre-existing inequalities and unequal power relations in the absence of significant equity-enhancing or redistributive policies.

52. For example, labour markets can reflect social norms, resulting in unequal outcomes. This can be seen, for instance, in occupational segregation, with women concentrated in jobs deemed "appropriate"; wage gaps, with women being remunerated less for the same work; and glass ceilings, where women have limited opportunities for promotion. Such unequal labour market outcomes are the result of pre-existing gender inequalities in access to resources; the distribution of unpaid household work, which limits women's labour market opportunities; and the "maternal penalty" associated with childbirth. Achieving equal opportunities and equitable outcomes for men and women in the labour market will thus require public policies that counter all forms of discrimination, as well as challenge gender norms that disadvantage women in society and the workplace.

53. Recent evidence has overturned widely held positions on the existence of a trade-off between redistribution and economic growth. Far from hindering growth, equity-enhancing interventions have shown in many cases to have positive impacts on growth. This is particularly true with respect to sustaining an inclusive pattern of growth. Examples of equity-enhancing interventions include: increasing the wages of less skilled workers, for example through increased minimum wage; cash transfers or other social protection programmes that improve educational attendance and outcomes; publicly financed investments in basic infrastructure; and progressive taxes on activities with negative environmental externalities.

54. However, a range of factors constrain the capacity of many States to pursue policies that ensure that people living in poverty or other disadvantaged groups benefit from growth. Low-income countries may lack the political or administrative capacities or policy space to take necessary actions, including influencing the initial distribution of productive assets; creating a pattern of growth that generates opportunities for all through productive and decent employment; safeguarding environmental assets; or mobilizing domestic revenues, thereby creating fiscal space

for redistribution. Such countries require support from the international community for strengthening capacities and institutions as well as meeting resource gaps.

55. At the same time, after initially adopting stimulus measures, many wealthier countries have responded to the global recession with austerity policies. This policy choice leads to lower aggregate demand and slower employment creation, and can also potentially slow growth in low-income countries.

56. The distribution of income and wealth are, however, only one dimension of inclusion. Commonly used measures of income inequality, such as the Gini coefficient, serve as imperfect proxies for the real outcome of concern, which is the capacity of individuals to realize their economic and social rights and to achieve an acceptable standard of living. Income is often not the only, or even the most, significant barrier to inclusion for many people. Unequal access to quality education, health care and basic social services such as water, sanitation and decent housing constitutes a significant barrier and results in income inequality and widening social disparities.

57. Social exclusion, discrimination and deprivation, whether temporary or persistent, also exacerbate income inequality and undermine the capacity of individuals to meet their material needs as well realize their rights. Critical non-income dimensions of exclusion may relate to identity (race, caste, gender or sexual orientation) or status, affiliation with groups (ethnic, religious), disability, citizenship or location. Such group-based ("horizontal")[7] inequalities cut across income or wealth deprivation and generally reinforce each other.

58. Some, such as gender-based inequalities, are widespread and persistent across most societies and are not generally reduced by economic growth alone. There is robust evidence that countries with greater gender equality in employment and education experience higher rates of economic growth and human development. The reverse relationship — that economic growth contributes to gender equality — is far weaker. Accompanying policies are thus necessary to ensure that unequal social and power relations are also transformed along with economic growth.

59. Some inequalities may change or new ones emerge in the context of rapid growth. For example, privileged groups may attempt to consolidate their gains through political or other means, to the exclusion of others. Thus, a particular ethnic group, or non-citizens, may become the subject of discrimination, creating new forms of exclusion and potentially generating conflict. The most persistent deprivations occur, however, where multiple forms of disadvantage intersect and reinforce each other: being born a female, into a disadvantaged caste or ethnic group, or in a remote rural area is likely to significantly limit an individual's life chances.

B. Sustaining development gains

60. An inclusive development agenda that aims to sustain gains into the future necessarily incorporates a temporal dimension. That is, it requires extending the

[7] Group-based inequalities or forms of exclusion are increasingly referred to as "horizontal" inequalities, as opposed to "vertical" inequality along the dimension of income or wealth. See Frances Stewart, "Approaches towards inequality and inequity: concepts, measures and policies", United Nations Children's Fund, Office of Research Discussion Paper: Perspectives on Equity (Florence, Italy, UNICEF, 2013).

notion of inclusion to those not yet born and considering the rights and well-being of both current and future generations.

61. This temporal dimension may concern individuals across the life course, for example ensuring that all children have the opportunity to become healthy and productive adults; that an episode of unemployment or ill-health does not push an individual or family back into poverty; or that everyone has a guarantee of income security in old age. Or it can be intergenerational, looking at how opportunities are transmitted between current generations, or concerned with future generations. It recognizes that current gains, such as in poverty reduction, are reversible and that choices made in the present, such as how natural resources are used, affect options in the future.

62. Defining a relevant time frame for policy is inevitably difficult. It involves trade-offs between short- and long-term goals, possibly between the well-being and rights of people who exist and those who do not and therefore have no voice, as well as dealing with considerable uncertainty about the future.

63. A longer-term perspective encompasses a wider range of necessary policies and the complementarities between them. It highlights the movement of people into as well as out of poverty. Evidence shows that the factors that move people out of poverty may not be the same as those that push them into, or back into, poverty. This asymmetry demands a broader range of complementary policies: employment creation, social assistance and access to credit, education and skills may all be elements that assist in moving people out of poverty. A broader range of social protection and insurance policies are critical for sustaining that progress. Such policies include labour market protections; legislation against discrimination to protect the rights of all; protection against ill-health; support for foreseeable life-course events, such as childbirth and ageing; and insurance against crop failure or other hazards.

64. Sustaining development gains into the future also means simultaneously addressing sustainability across all three dimensions of sustainable development, social, environmental and economic. A lack of sustainable policies, institutions or behaviours in one domain undermines efforts in all. This requires a systemic approach to policy, with an understanding of possibly complex synergies and trade-offs.

65. Natural resources and ecosystem services, for example, are clearly essential for meeting basic needs and reducing inequalities in the present and for the future. In the present, the poor are most likely to be negatively impacted by scarcity and degradation of or conflict over resources, thereby exacerbating existing inequalities. Poor rural, and often indigenous, populations are more likely to be located in ecologically rich but fragile regions that are vulnerable to environmental degradation. They depend on such environments for their survival, yet may be unable to manage them sustainably in the pursuit of viable livelihoods. Such limitations are usually compounded by other complex factors including property rights and ownership, increasing urbanization and the economic viability of traditional methods in the face of industrial competition.

66. People living in poverty, whether rural or urban, have few if any choices of where to live and are more likely to suffer from poor air and water quality, which in turn negatively affects their health and productivity. Lasting damage arising from the exploitation of nature or from climate change clearly affects possibilities for inclusive development and limits the rights and options of future generations.

67. Sustaining development gains across generations can only be built on a stable social foundation transmitted on an intergenerational basis ("social reproduction"[8]), which includes, for example, ensuring the health and education of children, maintaining a healthy and productive labour force, caring for the sick and elderly, and the transmission of civic values among citizens.

68. The family and community are most important for childrearing and transmission of values. They are also the locus of unpaid household work and services that are often undertaken outside the labour market. Such work tends to be highly gendered, with women bearing the greater share; this translates into reduced access to resources and opportunities, including participation in paid employment, and also undermines the value and recognition given to these unpaid contributions.

69. While policies that encourage gender equity are critical, the sustainability across generations of the social processes that ensure that individuals are productive and that societies are cohesive cannot be left to the household alone. The domestic sphere is integrally linked to the functioning of the economy and labour markets. The burdens of child-rearing and caregiving must be more equally shared, not only between men and women, but also between the family and State and market institutions. The child support grant provided in South Africa is one example. The grant plays an important role in providing income security to children growing up in poverty and has been redesigned to adopt a "follow the child" approach, whereby the grant is paid to the primary caregiver on behalf of the child.

70. Interventions that can reduce the burden on households include greater investment in basic infrastructure, such as water, sanitation and public transport. They also include essential social services such as universal health care, preschool childcare facilities and school feeding programmes; cash transfers for families with young children or subsidized housing for low-income families; ensuring adequate incomes for caregivers and care receivers through paid work and social transfers; maternity and paternity leave; and making care more visible in policies, statistics and public debates.

71. Sustaining development gains also requires resilient institutions and consistent policies. Resilience cannot reside only at the level of the individual or family. For example, moving in or out of poverty is rarely an individual event; families, households and extended networks are involved. Risks such as ill-health, unemployment and ageing can be more easily planned for or insured against within traditional social policies.

72. But resilience in the face of shocks that affect the wider community, such as economic and price volatility or climate-related events, cannot be met at the local level. They require stronger institutions at the national, regional and global levels that are able to effectively pool risks and redistribute resources. Universal programmes and policies, such as universal social protection, that allow for inclusion through risk pooling and redistribution can be more resilient and

[8] "Social reproduction" refers to the social processes and human relations associated with the reproduction and maintenance of individuals and communities, upon which all production and exchange rest. This occurs both on a generational (childbearing and -rearing, transmission of values) and a daily basis (care of children and the sick, cooking and cleaning). It involves both market and non-market activities and paid and unpaid work. See UNRISD, *Social Drivers of Sustainable Development*, Beyond 2015 Brief 04, February 2014.

sustainable when they are based on broad political support expressed through some form of social contract.

73. Such resilience in turn requires stronger, more integrated and coherent policymaking and national planning processes. Creating an environment and institutions for resilience and policy consistency is generally a long-term process. Policy reversals can, however, undermine progress very rapidly. Cuts in essential social services, such as education and health, have long-term implications that cannot be quickly reversed and can lead to a "generation lost" in terms of health, well-being and productivity.

C. Creating the conditions for sustained and inclusive development

74. The challenges and obstacles to inclusive development can be addressed only through an agenda for transformative change that generates equitable and sustainable development by tackling the structural causes of exclusion. Such change needs to be based on the values of the Millennium Declaration and the commitments made at other United Nations summits and conferences. Attention will need to focus on institutions, policies and interventions that can deliver transformative change.

75. Creating the conditions for sustained and inclusive development will rest, above all, on the institutional and governance arrangements that allow all individuals and groups to participate in meaningful ways in setting priorities, including the difficult decisions on how costs and benefits will be shared at different points in time.

76. At the national level, this requires active, informed and empowered citizens, organized groups and consultative processes and responsive States, as well as mechanisms of transparency, accountability and democratic forms of participation. Overcoming structural barriers and constraints to participation of excluded groups requires political arrangements and organized efforts that deliberately seek their inclusion. Legislation against discrimination and/or affirmative action policies signal the commitment of States to equity and the inclusion and empowerment of those excluded. They provide advocacy groups with support for their actions.

77. Complementary policies to ensure the inclusion of the most socially excluded comprise redistributive policies that are progressive both in terms of revenue mobilization (e.g., taxation or rents, such as from extractive industries) and on the expenditure side. Area-based policies that ensure that public investments in infrastructure and services reach poor or isolated communities can disproportionately benefit the most excluded. The mobilization and redistribution of resources necessary to achieve such transformative change will also require a social contract at the national level, linking the interests of wealthier and poorer citizens.

78. Creating the conditions for sustained and inclusive development and addressing the challenges and obstacles to inclusive development will also require a broader range of policy areas than were covered by the Millennium Development Goals. Attention will need to be given to complementarities, trade-offs and coherence among a range of policy actions across the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

79. Consistency among economic, social and environmental policies should be ensured, and the costs and benefits of such transformations need to be equitably

shared both between countries and population groups today, and between current and future generations. It will be important to assess and learn from the experiences of policy at the intersection of environmental, social and economic domains, such as the experience of Bolsa Verde and Bolsa Floresta in Brazil where cash transfers are linked to environmental protection or sustainable resource use, or a range of adaptation and mitigation efforts.

80. The transformation to a more inclusive development trajectory depends on a process of economic or structural change that prioritizes the creation of employment and decent work. This can be pursued by investing in education and skills, basic services and infrastructure and through selective and well-managed industrial and agricultural policies.

81. Macroeconomic frameworks are also important; they need to promote broad-based growth, an expansion of employment and countercyclical macroeconomic policies while avoiding procyclical policies such as restrictive fiscal policies during recessions and periods of slow growth. At the international level, coordinated policymaking and actions are critical for reducing and mitigating economic and financial shocks, ensuring an open and stable multilateral trading system, facilitating technology transfer and increasing financing for infrastructure investment and sustainable development.

82. Inclusive development also implies the need for effective policy frameworks for social protection, grounded in universal rights and built upon the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) of the International Labour Organization. Examples of recent commitments to social protection include the Renta Dignidad programme in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, which has secured a universal right of access to an old-age pension through the Constitution; universal health coverage in Thailand, which has been supported by strong political commitment and active civil society engagement; and the introduction of social pensions in a wide range of countries.

83. Policy frameworks for inclusive development should also lead to investment in quality social service provision, which cannot be separated from the commitment to social protection and which must be sustained, even during economic downturns, with support from the international community, if necessary. Such frameworks should also enhance productive capacities and reduce the burdens of childrearing and caregiving.

84. Social and economic policies need to be closely linked so that social protection and labour market interventions reinforce each other, with positive redistributive effects. Costa Rica, for example, has been acknowledged as being one of the most successful developing countries, simultaneously providing well-paid formal jobs and accessible and high-quality universal social services over the last six decades.

Partnership arrangements

85. At the international level, creating enabling conditions for sustained and inclusive development includes the need for a new global social contract, rooted in the principle of universalism that recognizes the differentiated responsibilities and capacities of States and people in contributing to a shared global agenda. Such a global contract would comprise a renewed global partnership for development, led

by all Member States, addressing systemic issues, as well as multi-stakeholder partnerships between Governments and the many development actors.

86. Millennium Development Goal 8, developing a global partnership for development, has been a significant element in supporting the achievement of the other Goals, although it is widely acknowledged that it is not comprehensive and that its monitoring is weak. As the world continues to slowly recover from the global financial and economic crisis and grapples with multiple challenges, the lingering effects of austerity measures have adversely affected the global partnership for development when it is most needed. Recognizing its importance, the Secretary-General has called for a renewed global partnership for development.

87. The 2013 Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force report (see para. 7 above) highlights that there has been further progress on a number of commitments in the past year, but significant backsliding in others. It also indicates that the political momentum necessary for advancing international development cooperation seems to have weakened. The volume of official development assistance declined in real terms in 2011 and 2012 owing to smaller aid budgets and austerity measures adopted by many developed countries, although it recovered and reached record levels in 2013.

88. Against this background, it is necessary to strengthen the global partnership for development on the basis of clear principles. The elements of such principles should include a clear consensus on its scope and composition, including aspects dealing with technical and concessional financing, financing for countercyclical macroeconomic stabilization and measures for social protection floors, as well as aspects related to the rules and governance of global trade, finance, technology generation and transfer, and other systemic issues of sustainable development. The process should also include a careful rethinking of ways to strengthen monitoring and accountability at the global level, using a combination of approaches and mechanisms that build on existing ones.

89. The issue of strengthening the participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making and norm and standard setting must also remain high on the agenda. The modest achievements in the reform of governance structures, quotas and voting rights of the Bretton Woods institutions, which partly recognize current realities and the need for more ambitious reforms to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions, are steps in the right direction (see General Assembly resolution 68/204).

90. In a post-2015 context, reaffirming this level of ambition should be seen as an integral part of efforts to counteract the asymmetries of the international economic system that make it difficult for developing countries to integrate beneficially in the global economy. This effort includes addressing the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

91. There is also a need to ensure that, unlike in the case of goal 8, there are concrete and measurable indicators on some key systemic issues. Member States have highlighted a few within the 19 preliminary focus areas being considered by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.[9] These measurable indicators could include a global governance system that fully reflects accepted

[9] Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html.

standards of representation, accountability and transparency, operating in the interests of all countries on an equal basis.

92. New actors have joined the global partnership for development. In particular, South–South and triangular cooperation are playing increasingly important roles and will be vital in the post-2015 era. In recent years, South-South cooperation has been expanding significantly in scope and in depth. Developing countries are exchanging knowledge, technologies and expertise. South-South and triangular cooperation have also increased the volume and diversity of opportunities for development assistance. In addition, economic growth in emerging economies has provided opportunities for stronger development partnerships in the areas of trade, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building among developing countries.

93. South-South cooperation complements broader development cooperation and brings together all actors: developing and developed countries, national and local governments, civil society, academia and the private sector, among others.

94. Another enabling condition for inclusive development involves multi-stakeholder partnerships. In an increasingly complex world, the implementation by Governments of all the mandates and goals agreed upon at the United Nations can best be achieved by leveraging catalytic partnerships with non-governmental organizations, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and academic and scientific institutions.

95. Broad strategic partnerships are indispensable to development cooperation, complementing other traditional sources of support. Such partnerships should go beyond generating much-needed catalytic resources to include action on the full range of development activities from poverty eradication to economic growth and sustainable development. They can also include regional and subregional organizations of both developing and developed countries around development issues in the context of South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation.

IV. Measuring progress in achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and beyond

96. As already noted, measurable targets and indicators provide concrete yardsticks to track, monitor and show progress in achieving development priorities. The Millennium Development Goals monitoring framework implemented at the global, regional and national levels helped to improve accountability for commitments and will offer important lessons in the implementation and follow-up of the post-2015 development agenda.

A. Monitoring and accountability mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels

97. The tracking framework for the Millennium Development Goals consists of a set of goals, targets and indicators that provide the basis for effective monitoring and reporting of results. The data used in monitoring global progress are collected from a variety of sources, including national household surveys, administrative data, and sometimes estimates derived from models.

98. While national capacities have developed substantially since the framework and indicators were established, with considerable international support provided for the development of national statistical capacity, more work and resources are needed to ensure full completion of and follow-up on the Millennium Development Goals agenda.

99. Data and measurement challenges aside, there is a dire need to review monitoring and accountability mechanisms as a means of successfully addressing the issues that have made it difficult to ensure progress in development, especially at the global level but at the national level as well.

100. At the national level this entails strengthening oversight over fulfilment of responsibilities by the public sector and enhancing checks and balances in governance. This involves strengthening the role of oversight institutions, including parliaments and audit institutions, and deepening the engagement of civil society, with the aim of holding the public sector accountable for a holistic vision of development.

101. National Millennium Development Goals reports have evolved considerably over time. Starting in 2001, the United Nations Development Group has periodically provided technical guidance and support for the preparation of these national reports as a mechanism of accountability and to stimulate policy dialogue with the participation of relevant stakeholders. National-level monitoring and reporting also serve other purposes, including advocacy, policy design and the identification of specific challenges that need to be addressed. Several countries have also prepared Millennium Development Goals reports at the subnational level, including Albania, Brazil and Sri Lanka.

102. Reports produced at the national level have been valuable sources of information for identifying trends in progress, evolving challenges and successes. As such, they can help bring together information on the determinants of progress in a coherent fashion. They also help guide national policy, for example by indicating those targets where progress has been too slow and which are therefore in need of special efforts for acceleration, and regions or population groups that are falling behind and need targeted support to catch up.

103. At the same time, many countries do not produce or report on all the indicators; for instance, only 11 per cent of developing countries produce data on maternal mortality. Such variations can either indicate technical challenges, in particular the lack of statistical capacity, or the relative priority that individual countries attach to particular targets.

104. National statistical offices have played a key role. Although capacities in these offices vary from country to country, they have improved over time. An analysis by the Statistics Division in 2013 looked in depth at 22 indicator series where there has been continuity in definitions and methods of reporting since 2003. It found that the number of countries in which trend data are available for a large number of series has increased significantly. Trend data for 16-22 indicators are now available for 106 countries, compared with none in 2003 and 84 in 2006 (see E/CN.3/2013/21). Similarly, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has reported that in its region, the number of countries with sufficient data in the global

Millennium Development Goals dataset for estimating progress towards the Goals increased for most Millennium Development Goals indicators.[10]

105. Failure to standardize data collection and analysis methods at the national and regional levels poses challenges in understanding, monitoring and evaluating global progress. Data standardization is important in determining which programmes and policies work and provides information that can inform policy decisions. At the national level, there is a need for consensus on the definition of variables and the identification of priority areas for data collection. There is also a need to improve data collection methods, particularly in developing countries. This requires technical and financial commitments at all levels.

106. Cross-country comparability of data is especially important for making comparisons and aggregating regional and global data. Country-level monitoring includes indicators, such as incidence of poverty measured on the basis of national poverty lines, and offers assessments that are not always comparable across countries. This illustrates the need to tailor Millennium Development Goal targets and indicators to the specific context of each country, while enabling cross-country comparisons.

107. Individual and groups of agencies within the United Nations system have been entrusted with reporting on different targets using standardized definitions to assist in monitoring. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators, consisting of international agencies, regional organizations and national statistical offices, has been responsible for the global and regional monitoring of progress towards the Goals. As mandated by the Statistical Commission, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group also helps to improve data and methodologies for the monitoring of the Goals and define priorities and strategies to support countries in data collection, analysis and reporting on the Goals.

108. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group has worked efficiently over the last 10 years to ensure that the monitoring of development goals is grounded firmly on sound statistical principles and to provide the latest and most reliable data from official statistical sources. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group provides inputs and guidance for the annual report of the Secretary-General on global progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Most regional monitoring and reporting efforts have involved collaboration between individual United Nations agencies and the regional commissions, and the regional development banks and other regional intergovernmental bodies.

109. The biggest challenge in monitoring and ensuring accountability at the global level has been the absence of binding obligations and commitments, especially in the economic and social development arena. In the light of this situation, it is important to explore other alternatives that build on existing mechanisms. The most feasible approach could be built on a more credible system of broad mutual accountability for universally applicable goals and commitments, with a strengthened institutional framework.

110. It is paramount that the post-2015 agenda include a strong and credible monitoring and accountability framework, building on existing systems. Significant

[10] Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Asia-Pacific Aspiration: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda, Asia-Pacific Regional MDGs Report 2012/13* (Bangkok, 2013).

incentives will need to be established to encourage accountability and reporting. There is also a need to ensure adequate complementarity between existing monitoring and accountability mechanisms within and outside the United Nations.

111. Such complementarity should be assured, for instance, between the work of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council Development Cooperation Forum. The High-level Political Forum, in accordance with its mandate, will review and promote the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. It will take into account the work of the Development Cooperation Forum which, within its mandate, could focus on the development cooperation aspects of a renewed global partnership for development. An appropriate division of labour will need to be developed between the two forums and, in the context of the financing for development process, on issues of means of implementation in particular.

112. In the wake of the global financial crisis and revelations of the importance of the actions of business in shaping development outcomes, it is clear that accountability in the post-2015 period should extend to all actors, including the private sector. The design of effective accountability mechanisms for all development actors remains a challenge that needs to be addressed as part of the post-2015 agenda.

B. New demands and opportunities for measuring progress

113. Discussions on the future development agenda thus far have indicated some of the new thematic areas that could require incorporation into the current global monitoring framework that characterizes the Millennium Development Goals. The Statistical Commission, on the basis of consensus on the new thematic areas, should support the establishment of baselines and appropriate metrics, based on scientific evidence, to help in assessing progress. Strong statistical capacity at country level and sound data-sharing policies at the regional and global levels would be necessary to support such a monitoring framework.

114. The United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda identified some areas where new indicators may be necessary. In some of these areas, for example income inequality within a country, different indicators such as the Gini coefficient or the Palma ratio are available and can be used, depending on the nature of the goals. It is therefore important to assess the various options available for monitoring the post-2015 agenda. In other areas, measuring a single indicator may be inadequate and a suite or group of indicators may be needed instead.

115. The new development agenda will both demand and present an opportunity for establishing clearer interlinkages between goals and targets. It is therefore useful to explore reporting modalities that highlight these interlinkages. For instance, improved access to energy can have an effect on food security through increased productivity and better storage and transportation practices. The United Nations Environment Programme, for example, suggests that linked sustainability targets would need to be applied to the most closely interrelated themes, including agriculture, population, economic growth, water and energy. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization notes that sustainability cannot be separated from production activities, which directly impact the environment and natural resources. The Global

Forest Resources Assessment of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, carried out at 5-10 year intervals, constitutes the most comprehensive international data source for forests, but lacks many of the socioeconomic aspects. Other potential contributions include the proposed indicators for sustainable development goals being developed by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

116. There will be a need for qualitative measures in areas such as policy and institutional capacity or governance deficits. Governance and the rule of law, peacebuilding and conflict indicators; indicators of satisfaction, perceptions and attitudes; and macroeconomic and structural development policy dimensions were not addressed in the Millennium Development Goals framework but play a major role in determining the effectiveness of development interventions. Governance indicators can look at key government processes and outcomes in development for all countries.

117. Population dynamics will also need to be integrated across indicators since the evolution of such dynamics could compound development challenges or help facilitate solutions. Looking towards the post-2015 development agenda, population dynamics may need to inform indicators on, for example, universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, fiscal policies and social protection, all of which are crucial considerations for sustainability.

118. National household surveys have increasingly been used to provide data for monitoring progress in a variety of development measures, including health, education, and income and consumption. Representative and comparable national household surveys are becoming more common and regular, but there is a paucity of this type of survey, particularly in the Middle East and North African countries and sub-Saharan Africa.[11]

119. Systems for collecting and analysing administrative data and vital statistics in developing countries require significant strengthening; this is an important investment if national data requirements are to be met. It is also necessary to strengthen capacities at the country level for designing better household survey questionnaires. Household surveys can then be used to generate data that cannot be obtained from administrative and civil registration records. Adequate information technology is also crucial for supporting effective administrative data systems and household surveys.

120. There have been significant developments in the generation of and access to data in recent years, thus expanding the possibilities for obtaining more timely information. Going forward, it will be important to consider the role, as well as the strengths and weaknesses, of new technologies, such as geo-positioning systems, mobile phones and the Internet, among others.

121. In many developing countries, mobile technologies are increasingly being used as data sources for service delivery monitoring and for general civic engagement. Additionally, the advent of new technologies and big data highlight the interconnectedness of public and private sources of information. It will therefore be

[11] See the World Bank PovcalNet, at http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/index.htm?4, for a list of available household surveys by country.

important to consider partnering with the private sector and civil society organizations to promote quality monitoring.

122. In General Assembly resolution 68/261, Member States adopted Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, setting out the basic values and principles that govern statistical work and guide the production and dissemination of statistical data. These principles should guide national, regional and global efforts going forward.

123. Ultimately, the most critical action remains developing and strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices of developing countries to produce quality information and collect data on economic, social and environmental indicators as a prerequisite for effective monitoring and reporting.

V. Recommendations

124. Overcoming the significant challenges to meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and sustaining development gains in the future will require addressing what the present report describes as some of the main facilitators and enablers of development, promoting inclusive development and enhancing measurement, monitoring and review. International cooperation and coordination will be essential to the success of this approach. The following recommendations are made with this in view.

Facilitators and enablers of development progress

125. National Governments should continue to pursue the application of national development strategies to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and consolidate gains. Effective policies within comprehensive national development strategies will provide a solid foundation for implementing a post-2015 development agenda.

126. National Governments are strongly urged to create conditions that foster peace, security and stability and promote human rights, including the rights of women and other disadvantaged groups. They should also strengthen their commitment and capacities to uphold the rule of law, democratic practices and good governance, including through political dialogue, the promotion of access to justice and the broad-based participation of citizens in decision-making.

127. Development actors at all levels — global, regional, national, subnational and local — should undertake measures to reform and strengthen institutions, particularly public institutions, to improve their effectiveness in accelerating development achievements, consolidating gains and moving forward to pursue the post-2015 development agenda.

128. The international community and national Governments should continue to emphasize and accord high priority to science, technology, innovation and the cultural dimension of development for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and beyond, as stated in the 2013 ministerial declaration.

129. While maintaining their primary responsibility for national development, Governments are urged to promote meaningful participation in national planning processes by civil society and other stakeholders in order to accelerate development progress and develop strong institutions and coherent policies.

Sustaining development gains through inclusive development

130. The international community should design a unified and universal post-2015 development agenda that is guided by the intrinsic linkage between poverty reduction and sustainable development. Such a transformative agenda will require promoting the achievement of inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and addressing the broad range of income and non-income dimensions of inequality and exclusion.

131. Furthermore, the post-2015 framework should include an intergenerational approach towards inclusive development, addressing equally the needs of children, their parents, those in the labour force and ageing populations, in order to combat inequalities that can become cumulative over time.

132. The international community is urged to undertake global economic and financial coordination to reduce macroeconomic volatility and risks, many of which inordinately affect developing countries and make it very difficult for them to integrate successfully into the global economy.

133. A new global partnership for inclusive and sustainable development that addresses global systemic imbalances should be put in place, particularly in the areas of aid, trade, finance, investment, technology transfer and climate change.

134. The international community, national Governments and all development actors are strongly encouraged to engage in inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships that strengthen the involvement of the regional commissions, regional development banks and financial institutions, the private sector, civil society and the scientific community, in order to inform and influence implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the elaboration and future implementation of a post-2015 development agenda.

135. Governments at all levels are urged to pursue broader and more integrated social, economic and environmental transformations, particularly of the contexts in which people living in poverty or other forms of exclusion are situated, through policies and interventions that address underlying structural constraints to development and drive change in a consistent and comprehensive manner.

136. In pursuing their national development strategies, Governments are urged to adjust their economic growth policies to foster structural change that prioritizes the creation of employment and decent work. They are also urged to reconfigure policies in the direction of more redistributive patterns of taxation and government expenditure.

137. Governments are strongly encouraged to include in their national strategies for raising individuals and families out of poverty special measures to safeguard them from the risks of falling back into poverty. Governments are further urged to formulate and implement complementary systems of universal social security and protection against external risks such as unstable labour markets, ill-health or climate conditions so that such risks are not borne alone by individuals or their families.

Measuring progress in achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and beyond

138. Governments, working with all relevant stakeholders, are encouraged to close measurement gaps by generating reliable, accessible and user-friendly data, disaggregated by gender, age, ethnic group and rural/urban setting, among others, with clearly defined baselines.

139. Governments are encouraged to expand the use of data in guiding evidence-based policymaking and measuring the quality of services, rather than focusing strictly on quantitative targets. They are further encouraged to strengthen statistical capacity by building and increasing the use of administrative data sources and by conducting regular, standardized household surveys for consistent monitoring.

140. The statistical community should support the development of post-2015 monitoring frameworks, taking into account the lessons from monitoring the Millennium Development Goals, to ensure that goals, targets and indicators are measurable at the national, regional and global levels. The statistical community should also propose and develop new indicators for emerging issues in the post-2015 development agenda, including inequality, sustainability, population dynamics and governance, and evaluate how such indicators would intersect with each other. New guidance will be needed on data-collection methods and sources to inform emerging issues for which there are no appropriate measurements.

141. The various entities of the United Nations system and all relevant stakeholders should coordinate their support to the building of national statistical and data capacity for monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the broader development agenda.

142. Government resources should be targeted at building the requisite capacities in national statistical systems through a comprehensive assessment of data gaps and the building of related capacities through a long-term and broad-based statistical development programme.

143. The international community, building on the Millennium Development Goals monitoring framework and in close cooperation with the statistical community, is urged to develop a limited number of well-defined, objectively measurable and relevant indicators to track progress of achievement under the post-2015 development agenda.

144. The international community is further invited to develop and maintain strong momentum in delivering on commitments to support development goals at the national, regional and global levels that are additional to other efforts and have a clear timeline. This should be accompanied by reliable and transparent data for measuring progress and effective mechanisms for review, monitoring and accountability.

145. The United Nations, and in particular the Economic and Social Council, should build on existing mechanisms and strengthen the monitoring and accountability platforms for development commitments.

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Item 17 (e) of the provisional agenda*
Social and human rights questions: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Note verbale dated 10 December 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to transmit to the Economic and Social Council the text of the letter of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, Davit Darakhvelidze, dated 2 December 2013 addressed to the Secretary-General (see annex).

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 10 December 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With the present letter, on behalf of the Government of Georgia, I would like to express willingness to become a member of the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). We believe that Georgia meets the criteria for membership established by the relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions.

As you are well aware, currently there are 272,000 internally displaced persons in my country, which amount to about 90,000 internally displaced families from the occupied regions of Georgia — Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia — as a result of the conflicts during 1991-1993 and the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008. Unfortunately, despite the best of our joint endeavours and the continuous efforts of the Government of Georgia, an impressive number of internally displaced persons still live in dire conditions of emotional, psychological and financial hardship.

In addition to the internally displaced persons, Georgia has refugees from Chechnya (Russian Federation) and has received an influx of refugees from other countries, especially as a result of the latest developments in Syria and Egypt. Consequently, the number of refugees and asylum seekers has become 10 times greater than before and reached about 1,000 persons. Georgia's borders remain open to asylum seekers who have fled from countries where massive human rights violations have taken place.

The new Government of Georgia resulting from the elections of 1 October 2012 pledged to internally displaced persons and refugees that it will work to resolve their problems in accordance with international standards concerning internally displaced persons and refugee protection. Georgia remains strongly committed to developing the most effective mechanisms in compliance with international standards for respecting the rights of internally displaced persons, refugees and stateless persons. Georgia intends to accede to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness by the end of 2013.

Serious efforts have been undertaken to improve the legislative basis with regard to refugees. Owing to the fact that the Law of Georgia on Refugees was not in compliance with the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a draft law on refugees and humanitarian status was elaborated by the Ministry in line with international standards and conventions. The draft law was adopted by the parliament on 6 December 2011.

Considering that 6 of every 100 Georgians are internally displaced persons and out of respect for the international protection regime for refugees and stateless persons, Georgia herewith wishes to announce that it intends to apply for membership in the UNHCR Executive Committee.

Georgia remains dedicated to strengthening its strategic cooperation with UNHCR and the international community for the purpose of resolving protracted problems related to internal displacement in Georgia and contribute to the solution of problems of internally displaced persons, refugees and stateless persons worldwide.

(*Signed*) Davit **Darakhvelidze**